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Objections to the Specification and Claims

Item 2 objects to the disclosure. Applicant has amended the disclosure to provide the current status of the parent application. Applicants have further Rewritten paragraph [0039] to describe FIG. 6 as the assembled version of FIG. 5. Applicants request that these objections be withdrawn.

Item 3 objects to minor informalities in claims 17 and 35. These claims have been amended to remove these informalities. Therefore Applicants request that the objections to claims 17 and 25 be removed.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In Item 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1-11 and 32-43 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) in view of U.S. Patent No.4,993,513 to Inoue et al. ("the '513 Patent") in combination with U.S. Patent No. 5,955,707 to Fritz ("the '707 Patent"). In response, Applicants have amended claims 1, 6, and 32 to further define that which Applicants consider their invention and therefore respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn. Amended independent claims 1 and 32 are drawn to an assembly including a multilayer bushing fitted to the exhaust pipe. Support for these amendments may be found in at least paragraph [0039]. It is submitted that the multilayer bushing "provide[s] a snug, expandable fit to the muffler shell and provide gas tight properties to the bushing assembly." Nowhere within the '513 or '707 Patent is such a multilayer bushing shown or suggested. Therefore, applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-11 and 32-43 be withdrawn.

In Item 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 12-31 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) in view of U.S. Patent No.4,993,513 to Inoue et al. ("the '513 Patent") in combination with U.S. Patent No. 5,955,707 to Fritz ("the '707 Patent") and U.S. Patent No. 5,726,398 to Zahn ("the '398 Patent". In response, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 16 to further define that which Applicants consider their invention and therefore respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn. As discussed above amended independent claims 1 and 16 are drawn to an assembly including a multilayer bushing fitted to the exhaust pipe. Nowhere within the '513 or '707 Patent is such a multilayer bushing shown or suggested. Therefore, applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 12-31 be withdrawn.

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CONCLUSION

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In light of the above, Applicants believe that this application is now in condition for allowance and therefore request favorable consideration.

If any points remain in issue, which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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If any fees are due in connection with the filing of this response, including any fee for a required extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), including the fee for the requested three-month extension of time for which Applicants hereby petition, please charge all necessary fees to Deposit Account No. 50-0568.

Respectfully submitted,



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